Post-matric scholarship

*12. SHRI P. RAJEEVE: Will the Minister of SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT be pleased to state:

(a) the year in which the scholarship amount under the post matric scholarship scheme was revised;

(b) if not revised in the last couple of years, whether Government has taken any initiative to revise the scholarship amount taking into account the cost of living; and

(c) if so, the details thereof?

THE MINISTER OF SOCIAL JUSTICE AND EMPOWERMENT (SHRI MUKUL WASNIK): (a) The Ministry of Social Justice and Empowerment is implementing two post-matric scholarship schemes — one for Scheduled Caste students and the other for students belonging to Other Backward Classes (OBCs). Scholarship rates under the Scheme of Post-Matric Scholarship for SC students were last revised *w.e.f.* 1.4.2003.

After introduction of the Scheme of Post-matric Scholarship for OBC students during 1998-99, it has not been revised so far.

(b) and (c) Revision of scholarship rates, income ceiling and other norms under the two schemes is under consideration

Indian land claimed by Bangladesh

*13. SHRI PRAKASH JAVADEKAR: Will the Minister of EXTERNAL AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether it is a fact that Bangladesh has laid claim to 30,000 acres of Indian land which have surfaced on the border as a result of river movements;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures Government is taking/proposes to take to demarcate this newly surfaced land?

THE MINISTER OF STATE IN THE MINISTRY OF EXTERNAL AFFAIRS (SHRIMATI PRENEET KAUR): (a) No, Sir. The Government has not received any claim from the Government of Bangladesh over 30,000 acres of Indian land, which is alleged to have surfaced on the border as a result of river movement.

(b) and (c) Does not arise.

Indo-German Science Express

*14. SHRI M.V. MYSURA REDDY:
SHRI NANDAMURI HARIKRISHNA:

Will the Minister of SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY be pleased to state:

(a) the aims and objectives of Indo-German Science Express; and

(b) in what manner the said express is helping in bringing back students to take up science stream which otherwise is falling back when compared to computer sciences?

THE MINISTER OF STATE OF THE MINISTRY OF SCIENCE AND TECHNOLOGY (SHRI PRITHVIRAJ CHAVAN): (a) The main objective of this science exhibition mounted in rail coaches is to generate awareness about science and popularize It amongst the masses, in general and students, in particular. The exhibition also aims at attracting students to opt for careers in science research and teaching by informing them about career prospects and challenges in various areas of science and technology. The mobile exhibition has travelled to over 100 towns and cities across the country in about 400 days since its launch on 30 October 2007. It has been visited by over 35 lakh people, mostly high school students and science teachers.

(b) This mobile exhibition helps to project the excitement of research for improving our knowledge in frontier areas. The visitors are encouraged to do hands-on activities and experiments. Outstanding achievements by Indian researchers are projected, opportunities for research In national laboratories are explained and counseling sessions for career guidance arranged. Factors that Influence career choices of good students are numerous. This exhibition encourages decision making based on better information.

Attacks on Indians in foreign countries

*15. SHRI SUBHASH PRASAD YADAV:
SHRI D. RAJA:

Will the Minister of OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS be pleased to state:

(a) whether Government is aware of the constant attacks on the Indian diaspora in foreign countries, particularly in Australia and Canada;

(b) if so, the details thereof; and

(c) the measures initiated as well as proposed to be initiated in this regard by the Indian Government?

THE MINISTER OF OVERSEAS INDIAN AFFAIRS (SHRI VAYALAR RAVI): (a) to (c) There have been instances of attacks on Indians in foreign countries. The details of cases reported recently from Australia and Canada are given in Annexure [*See* Appendix 217 Annexure No. 1]. Whenever instances of attacks on Indian nationals come to notice, the matter is taken up with the concerned Governmental authorities abroad. The Indian Mission also provides necessary support and assistance to the victim. In respect of Australia, a series of measures have been undertaken, as detailed in the Statement.

Statement-I

Details of measures initiated by Indian Government in respect of Australia

The issue of attack on Indian students in Australia and other countries have been taken up with the concerned authorities, including at the highest level in the case of Australia. In a telephonic conversation, when the Australian Prime Minister Kevin Rudd called our Prime Minister immediately after his assumption of office, our concerns at the attacks on Indian students were conveyed to him suitably. The Prime Minister made a reference to this in the